



CSC Alumni Associations

Handbook for Coordinators and Committee Members

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Commonwealth Scholarship Commission Alumni Network

Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows have been funded by the UK government through the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK (CSC) since 1959. Our alumni comprise highly influential and notable figures, including prime ministers and leaders in government, Nobel prize winners, academics, scientists, writers, entrepreneurs, and leaders in major NGO's and businesses.

CSC alumni associations

Alumni associations provide a central hub for alumni to network and share and promote their scholarship experiences and development impact in their home country. Associations play an important role in connecting Commonwealth Alumni after completing their studies, highlighting the impact of Commonwealth Scholarships through engagement opportunities, such as events and other activities, and promoting future Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship opportunities.

For Scholars soon to depart to the UK and undertake their studies, associations provide a network of individuals who can share advice and support to new Scholars, and for those returning home, a professional community whose knowledge and experience can help to guide and support Scholars in their early career. Associations also provide a social and professional platform for Commonwealth Alumni to share their news and updates and connect with alumni in their home country on projects and ongoing work.

The CSC's alumni associations work with the Alumni Team and British Council (in select countries) and are coordinated by alumni volunteers who are responsible for organising engagement opportunities which encourage networking and ongoing professional development.

Objectives

The primary objectives of associations are to:

- Connect Commonwealth Alumni in their home country, or country of residence, and foster an active and engaged community
- Connect Commonwealth Distance Learning Scholars studying in their home country to a network of peers
- Provide current Scholars with advice and guidance on their academic studies, and support Scholars in translating new knowledge and skills on their return
- Support the work of the CSC in reaching out to the next generation of scholars as ambassadors of the scheme
- Promote the value of higher education in achieving sustainable development at a regional, national, and international level
- Promote Commonwealth Alumni as a collective of experts, providing valuable input to support a range of sustainable development issues both nationally and internationally

Each association is managed by a coordinator, and in some cases a wider committee. The primary role of the coordinator is to organise opportunities for Commonwealth Alumni and Distance Learning Scholars in the same country to network, and create a vibrant and connected national alumni community. As a coordinator, you are responsible for actively encouraging Commonwealth Alumni and Scholars in your country to engage with each other, and act as an ambassador to the CSC.

This handbook is for association coordinators and committee members, and is designed to:

- Support coordinators and committee members in setting up, managing, and maintaining an alumni association
- Outline the CSC's expectations for alumni associations and the role of coordinators and committee members as ambassadors for the CSC
- Provide coordinators and committee members with information on ways they can engage Scholars and alumni through the alumni association. Where events or activities may be organised, the handbook provides information on ways these can be developed to address core development themes, such as the CSC's six development themes, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) priorities, and the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

CSC Code of Conduct for Alumni

As a Commonwealth Alumnus, you are an ambassador for both the CSC and your home country, and your actions and communication will have an impact on the reputation of both. You are therefore expected to adhere to high standards of conduct and behaviour and to show respect to others and your surroundings at all times.

The CSC aims to enable a free exchange of ideas during all its activities in order to achieve the maximum potential impact for all participants. Recognising the diversity of backgrounds of those within the CSC community – including in terms of race, religion, gender, sexuality, age, cultural values, and disability status - you are reminded to always be respectful to others and to behave professionally. All communication should be appropriate for an audience including people of many different backgrounds; harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary comments or jokes are not appropriate, nor is discrimination either direct or indirect.

The same considerations apply to social media and electronic communications, including the provisions of this Code, apply as would to speaking in public or writing something for publication, either officially or in a personal capacity. When engaging with social media you should at all times respect confidentiality, financial, legal, and personal information. Social media and electronic communications, whether public or private, addressed to a group or an individual, should never be used for harassment, bullying, defamation, or any behaviour that makes another individual feel threatened or uncomfortable.

The CSC is committed to proactively safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Commonwealth Scholars, Fellows, and Alumni and to protecting all those with whom award-holders come into contact. This includes contact unrelated to the CSC and applies to electronic contact as well as all activities conducted overseas including fieldwork. The CSC requires Commissioners, Secretariat staff, and Scholars, Fellows, and Alumni to fulfil their role and responsibilities and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with requirements for safeguarding. The CSC safeguarding policy is available on the [gov.uk website](#).

The CSC operates a zero-tolerance attitude to fraud and will investigate all instances of actual, attempted, and suspected fraud, bribery, or corruption committed by Commonwealth Alumni in relation to any activities conducted with support from – including promotional and financial – or on behalf of the CSC. Any such instances will be considered under the CSC's anti-fraud policy, which is available on the [gov.uk website](#).

Commonwealth Alumni are expected to treat any staff engaged within the CSC Secretariat, or within any other organisation contracted to provide services to the Commission, with courtesy and respect. It is expected that such staff will show you the same consideration in return.

As a Commonwealth Alumnus and ambassador of the CSC, you may be approached or volunteer to provide support and guidance to potential applicants. In doing so, Commonwealth Alumni must ensure they share correct information to avoid misinforming potential applicants by following guidance on the [CSC website](#). Commonwealth Alumni should not seek to or expect to profit from such support financially, or in other ways.

Any complaints received or issues related to the behaviour of Commonwealth Alumni brought to the Commission's attention will be taken very seriously and any behaviour that does not adhere to the above values and expectations will be investigated by the CSC. Your engagement with the CSC may be terminated at any time for reasons of unsatisfactory conduct, as outlined in this Code.

The CSC Code of Conduct for Alumni can also be found on the [CSC website](#).

CSC Code of Conduct for Alumni Associations

As a coordinator or committee member of a CSC alumni association, you are expected to adhere to the Alumni Code of Conduct at all times and ensure that the actions, outputs, and communications of the alumni association are in agreement with these high standards of conduct and uphold the reputation of the CSC.

As stated in the Alumni Code of Conduct, the CSC is committed to proactively safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Commonwealth Scholars, Fellows, and Alumni and to protecting all those with whom the CSC comes into contact. The CSC requires Commissioners, Secretariat staff, and Scholars, Fellows, and Alumni to fulfil their role and responsibilities and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with requirements for safeguarding. The CSC safeguarding policy is available on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk).

Any association events or activities must be consistent with the requirements for safeguarding outlined in the CSC's policy. Where associations are requested to complete risk assessments or other documents related to safeguarding measures, they must do so in a timely manner and follow any further recommendations or guidance.

The CSC operates a zero-tolerance attitude to fraud and will investigate all instances of actual, attempted, and suspected fraud committed by Commonwealth Alumni acting on behalf of the alumni association in relation to any activities conducted with support from – including promotional and financial – or on behalf of the CSC. Any such instances will be considered under the CSC's anti-fraud policy, available on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk).

Commonwealth Alumni are expected to treat any staff engaged within the CSC Secretariat, or within any other organisation contracted to provide services to the Commission, such as the British Council, with courtesy and respect. It is expected that such staff will show you the same consideration in return. Associations are expected to report their activities to relevant contacts within the CSC or British Council, as outlined in the *CSC Alumni Associations- Handbook for Coordinators and Committee Members* and any communications received from relevant contacts.

The CSC aims to enable a free exchange of ideas during all its activities in order to achieve the maximum potential impact for all participants. Recognising the diversity of backgrounds among our award holders – including in terms of race, religion, gender, sexuality, age, cultural values, and disability status – you are reminded to always be respectful to others and to behave professionally. All communication should be appropriate for an audience including people of many different backgrounds; harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary comments or jokes are not appropriate, nor is discrimination either direct or indirect. Associations should ensure engagement opportunities are inclusive and reflect and encourage engagement from diverse alumni communities within their country.

Social media is a public forum and the same considerations, including the provisions of this Code, apply as would to speaking in public or writing something for publication, either officially or in a personal capacity. When engaging with social media you should at all times respect confidentiality, financial, legal, and personal information. Social media, whether public or private, should never be used for harassment, bullying, defamation, or any behaviour that makes another individual feel threatened or uncomfortable.

Associations must be transparent in their governance and ensure that all those engaging in the association have access to documentation and statements regarding the structure and management of the association, coordinator and/or committee member details (name and role), association constitutions, and registration information (where legally registered).

Any associations which collect fees must be transparent in how they intend to use these, the management of fees and persons responsible, and the security of any personal or banking details shared. All financial statements and transactions must conform to the law and financial records must be accurate and reliable. Associations must report how fees will be and have been used as part of the association's Annual General Meeting and in any communication pertaining to fees. Fees must not be used as a means to prevent Scholars and alumni from participating in the association.

Where associations may partner with external organisations or accept funds from external sources, selections must be made on the basis of quality, reputation, and suitability for the activity through a process that is fair and transparent. Due diligence checks must be completed before entering into any agreement and reported to the CSC. This includes the identification of any conflicts of interest, direct or indirect, amongst association members, as well as any appearance of conflict by way of connection to external organisations or sources.

Associations in possession of any data involving membership and engagement, personal data, and financial records have an obligation to ensure the safety of that data. Associations must ensure all possible precautions are taken to protect data and that access is limited to key association coordinators. Information about who will manage data and how it will be kept must be made available. Associations must not disclose data to a third party, or those not listed as managing or accessing any data held.

Any complaints received or issues related to the behaviour of a CSC alumni association brought to the Commission's attention will be taken very seriously and any behaviour that does not adhere to the above values and expectations will be investigated by the CSC. CSC support to an alumni association may be terminated at any time for reasons of unsatisfactory conduct, as outlined in this Code.

Working with the Alumni Team and British Council

The CSC works with the British Council in the 14 countries below to deliver pre-departure support to new Scholars and Fellows and alumni engagement activities. Alumni associations in these countries will work with British Council teams, as well as receive news and updates from the UK-based Alumni Team.

West and Southern Africa	South Asia	East Africa
Ghana Malawi Nigeria Sierra Leone South Africa	Bangladesh India Malaysia Pakistan Sri Lanka	Kenya Tanzania Uganda Zambia

Countries not listed above will work directly with the Alumni Team.

Quarterly updates

Associations will receive quarterly updates from the Alumni Team, which will include news from the CSC, ongoing and future alumni opportunities and activities, and information which can be shared on social media groups. You may also receive mailings outside of the touchpoints below with information to promote, such as application deadlines and links to the most recent issue of *Common Knowledge*.

Quarterly updates will be sent in:

- March
- June
- September
- December

Key events

You will be expected to support the delivery of key Scholar and alumni events in your home country, including pre-departure and welcome home events, as well as promoting UK based events, such as the Farewell Event and Welcome Day. You can read more about these later in the handbook.

Annual Capacity Building Workshop for Alumni Associations

Each year, all alumni association coordinators and committee members will be invited to attend a capacity building workshop delivered by the Alumni Team and British Council. The purpose of the workshop is to enhance the skills of alumni coordinators in building alumni communities and to share best practise, tools, and resources in the coordination of alumni engagement activities.

Regional meetings

We encourage alumni associations to explore relationships within their regions and across countries to share experiences and best practice, and discuss ideas for future engagement opportunities.

Coordinating an Alumni Association

Will coordinating an association take up a lot of my time?

No. Most coordinators spend 2-3 hours per month keeping members up to date with updates from the CSC and/or British Council, and news or opportunities of interest.

Organising an event or activity may require additional time and the Alumni Team/British Council will provide support.

How do I contact Commonwealth Alumni and Scholars?

You will be responsible for creating and managing a social media group (for example LinkedIn, Facebook) for your country association to encourage interaction between Scholars and alumni, and provide a central point of information and engagement.

The Alumni Team/British Council can contact alumni and Scholars for whom we hold up to date contact details on your behalf to notify them of associations news and opportunities. Under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) contact details cannot be shared with alumni associations.

How can I engage alumni in the association?

Information about associations is available on the [CSC website](#) and associations are promoted in [Common Knowledge](#) and the alumni newsletter, [The Common Room](#). For Scholars coming to the end of their award, information about alumni associations and how to engage in home country networks is shared in departing Scholar mailings and as part of their certificate mailing.

Welcome home events provide an opportunity to connect with recently returned Scholars and introduce them to the alumni network. Opportunities such as the [CSC Mentoring Programme](#) and [Knowledge Hubs](#) also provide ways alumni can connect with Scholars from their home country and across the Commonwealth and encourage ongoing engagement.

Will I be the only coordinator in my country, or can other alumni help?

We encourage you to identify alumni volunteers to support you, especially in countries where alumni are geographically spread.

Are there any resources available to support the alumni association?

All coordinators will be given access to materials and resources, available on the [CSC website](#).

Who can join the association?

Alumni associations must be open to all Commonwealth Scholars and Alumni.

What type of activities will I be expected to organise?

You will be expected to organise a minimum of **one** event or engagement activity per year and an **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**. You can read more about the types of events and engagement activities you may want to organise to bring alumni together later in this handbook.

All alumni association events and activities must be shared with the Alumni Team/British Council in advance so we can support the organisation and promotion of these. Further information on this process is provided later in this handbook. If alumni choose to meet in a social setting you do not need to notify us in advance, however you should let us know and can of course send pictures or tag the CSC on social media to share your meet-up.

You will also be expected to support the delivery of a pre-departure event for new Scholars before they travel to the UK and commence their studies, and a welcome home event for recently returned Scholars. The Alumni Team and British Council will lead on the development and implementation of these two activities with the support of the association.

Am I responsible for the cost of events?

Associations are encouraged to organise low-cost or free events and guidance is provided in this handbook on ways to do this. Funding **may** be provided to support the cost of events and engagement activities. You can read more about this process later in the handbook.

In some cases, associations request fees from members as a means of funding events and activities. Where fees are collected, associations must follow guidance in the Code of Conduct for Alumni Associations.

Tips for creating an association

Choose an association name

It is important that you have a clear name for the association to help Scholars and alumni identify the group. This does not have to be complicated and can be 'Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows Alumni Association [Country]'.

Some associations may choose to design a logo for their group, although this is not a requirement. If you choose to design a logo, you must inform the Alumni Team/British Council and send a copy as a jpeg attachment for approval. Please note, the CSC logo **cannot** be used in any association logos.

Identify association aims

Producing a list of aims for the association will help to structure engagement, and provide a measurable incentive for Scholars and alumni to get involved, and stay involved. You should share your association's aims with the Alumni Team/British Council so they can support the association in meeting them.

Create and maintain an active association social media group

You will be responsible for creating and managing a social media group (for example LinkedIn, Facebook) for your country association to encourage interaction between alumni and Scholars, and provide a central point of information and engagement. We strongly advise that you set up a closed group for Scholars and alumni only. Links to the online group will be included in CSC promotion of the association to enable Scholars and alumni to easily connect with the association. For data protection reasons, we cannot promote or share WhatsApp groups that may be set up to connect members and so we advise you create a LinkedIn or Facebook group.

The CSC has a social media policy for all online groups associated with the CSC and you should ensure that you are familiar with this and that the policy is displayed as part of the group information. You can find the policy later in the handbook.

As part of the Alumni Team's quarterly updates to alumni associations, you will receive content to share on your social media group alongside member postings to help keep Scholars and alumni engaged.

Hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM)

All associations must hold an AGM to update members on previous events or activities, discuss future events or activities, and give members the opportunity to feedback and offer input to the running of the association.

Define the association structure and roles

There is not a prescribed structure for alumni associations, however you may wish to consider additional roles to support the running of the group.

If you choose to create additional roles you should agree the length of term (usually maximum of two years). This will allow other alumni to contribute to the running of the association and encourage new ideas. You must submit a copy of the association structure to the Alumni Team/British Council, including details of alumni appointed.

Encourage input from Scholars and alumni

You should encourage Scholars and alumni to suggest the types of engagement opportunities they would be interested in taking part in. You may choose to post a question on your social media platform, or set up a simple poll or survey asking them to rate event suggestions.

Stay connected with the Alumni Team/British Council

As highlighted earlier the Handbook, the Alumni Team/British Council will keep in contact with you throughout the year and you should keep them informed of all alumni association activity.

Promoting alumni associations

Alumni associations will be promoted in the following ways:

To Scholars

- In the Confirmation of Award (COA) letter sent to selected Scholars and Fellows
- At pre-departure briefings for selected Scholars and Fellows
- In the 'Handbook for Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows in the United Kingdom'
- On the [CSC website](#) and social media channels
- In the departing Scholar mailing sent to all Scholars and Fellows at the point of/just following their return home. Associations will be requested to provide welcome text on the association which will be updated annually.
- At CSC Welcome and Farewell events (held in the UK)
- Via weblinks in hard and digital copies of [Common Knowledge](#) and the quarterly alumni newsletter, [The Common Room](#)
- At events and other engagement activities

Information will also be shared on the CSC website and social media channels. You should ensure you keep the Alumni Team/British Council informed of any changes to the alumni association so these can be reflected in published information.

CSC website

Introductory information about alumni associations will be available on the [CSC website](#) and include the name and Scholarship/Fellowship details of the coordinator/committee leads, the name of the association, and links to social media groups. Where a non-personal email account has been set up for the association, this will be included. Associations must ensure they share any changes to coordinator/committee leads with the Alumni Team/British Council so this page can be kept up to date.

As well as information about associations, event and activity information may also be shared on the CSC website to promote the work of associations. It is important that you keep the Alumni Team/British Council informed of all activities.

CSC social media channels

The CSC shares digital content, including news, stories, and updates via the following social media channels:

- Twitter twitter.com/commschols handle [@commschols](https://twitter.com/commschols)
- Facebook facebook.com/commonwealthscholarships
- LinkedIn linkd.in/commonwealthscholarships
- Flickr flickr.com/photos/cscuk
- YouTube youtube.com/user/CSCintheUK
- SoundCloud soundcloud.com/cscradio

The primary digital channels are Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

Data protection

Under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR), Scholar and alumni contact details cannot be shared with alumni associations. It is therefore important that associations create online communities for Scholars and alumni to choose to join. The Alumni Team/British Council will promote alumni associations and can share information about events and activities with Scholars and alumni for whom they hold contact details.

You may choose to ask Scholars and alumni to share their contact details with you so that you can contact them directly, however not all will agree to this.

If you hold personal, membership, and/or engagement data of Scholars and alumni, you **must** ensure their data is protected by following the precautions listed below:

- Decide how you will store the data. The easiest way to do this is electronically, such as a spreadsheet. In deciding on the storage device, you must consider data security and whether this is a secure and reliable option.
- Develop a clear policy on who will have access to this data. If the association is coordinated by a committee, will all members have access? You must inform Scholars and alumni who will have access to the data. You should also consider how the data will be securely transferred to any new committee members. Scholars and alumni must be notified if their data is to be managed by a different or new committee member and given a period of time to ask for their data to be deleted if they are not comfortable with this change.
- You must inform alumni how you will use their data, for example sending association newsletters and event invites.
- You must not share the personal data with a third party.
- If the data is kept electronically the computer must be password protected. As an extra precaution you should password protect the data file. If you keep a hard copy of the data this must be stored in a lockable drawer or cabinet.
- If a Scholar or alumnus requests that you no longer contact them you must delete their contact information from your records immediately.

If you choose to email your contacts, you **must** ensure that email addresses are **blind carbon copied**- written in the BCC address field- or individual emails are sent to each recipient. This is to avoid sharing email address data with anyone the Scholar or alumnus has not agreed to share this with.

You may also gather images as part of your events and activities. All attendees must be notified in advance if photographs are to be taken at events and how they will be used. All images must be securely stored and where possible alumni and other attendees featured clearly labelled in the file name.

The CSC does **not** accept images of children and those under 18 years of age who attend alumni events or activities and we strongly advise that you consider all safeguarding risks where those under 18 attend events and may be captured in photos.

Social media policy

The CSC has clear rules for its social media groups which outline the behaviour and procedures we expect Commonwealth Scholars and Alumni to adhere to as members. We expect alumni associations to follow and, where supported by the platform, display these rules on their social media groups.

- This group is a safe space for its members, where anyone can relax and express themselves, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of their ethnicity, sexual orientations, gender identity or expression, cultural background, religious affiliation, age, or physical or mental ability. All members should follow the CSC Alumni Code of Conduct.
- Oppressive language and behaviour are NOT welcome within the group. Members should avoid making negative comments that reference specific individuals either within or outside the group. If you believe a post is inappropriate and would like to inform someone, we strongly encourage you to first notify [Facebook/LinkedIn].
- If a comment has offended you and you feel strongly that it should be taken down, you should politely ask the member to take their comment down. If they do not respond in a timely way, you should message the Group Manager directly with your request.
- You should aim to assume that other members have good intentions. Make sure that you read posts carefully to avoid unnecessary confusion, and ask other members to elaborate if the meaning is unclear. If you are the author of a post and others are reacting negatively, consider if there is a better way of making your point. If one person has expressed offence, it may be that others are feeling the same.

If you receive complaints about posts made to the group, you should notify the Alumni Team/British Council. If you feel unsure how to handle a complaint, please seek advice from your contact.

Events and Activities

There are a number of different types of events you may wish to organise and some examples are given below. This list is not exhaustive- if you have any suggestions for additional events, please let us know so we can share these!

Key events

Pre-departure briefing*

Pre-departure briefings are a great opportunity to meet new Scholars and introduce them to the wider Commonwealth Scholarships community in their country before they commence their studies. They also offer the opportunity for alumni to offer tips about studying in the UK, and for Scholars to ask questions.

Welcome home event*

Welcome home events are an for recently returned Scholars (or new alumni) to meet with alumni and share their experiences in the UK, and seek advice from alumni on their next steps.

* In countries where the British Council provides alumni support, pre-departure and welcome events will be organised directly by the British Council. Association coordinators and the wider alumni community will be invited to take part in organised activities and sessions. In all other countries, associations will work with the Alumni Team to deliver these events.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

All associations must hold an AGM to update members on engagement over the year, discuss future planning, and give members the opportunity to feedback and input into the running of the association. Where associations are small, or alumni are geographically spread out, coordinators may circulate a summary of the year's activity to alumni for comment instead. Coordinators should submit a summary of discussions, outcomes, and future objectives to the Alumni Team/British Council.

Panel discussions and topical lectures

Alumni are experts on a range of topics and panel discussions and topical lectures are a good way to bring alumni together to talk about important issues across disciplines and sectors. You may wish to theme discussions around a CSC development theme, Sustainable Development Goal, or FCDO priority in your country.

Panel discussions and topical lectures can be open to the CSC community, as well as a wider audience, including local schools, universities, and the general public, as a means of raising awareness of key issues and raising the profile of Commonwealth Alumni..

Promoting wider alumni activities

You do not always have to organise an event to bring alumni together. Alumni may give public presentations or talks, book readings, or performances which others can attend out of interest, or to provide support. It is important to let alumni know that they should share this information through the social media group and you can send out monthly calls to encourage alumni to share this information.

Virtual events

Where face to face events may not be possible, or to increase the number of alumni able to engage in events, you may wish to consider hosting an event online, such as an alumni talk or panel discussion, and there are platforms available to host online events for free.

You can also explore cross country events via this method and bring alumni and alumni associations together in this way.

Planning Events and Activities

It is expected that each association organises a minimum of **one** event or activity per year and an **AGM**. You will also be expected to support the delivery of a pre-departure event for new Scholars before they travel to the UK and commence their studies, and a welcome home event for recently returned Scholars in liaison with the Alumni Team/British Council.

You should encourage Scholars and alumni to suggest the types of events or activities they would be interested in taking part in before you submit your workplan. You may choose to post a question on your social media platform, or set up a simple poll or survey asking them to rate event suggestions.

Low cost and free events

Venues can be expensive and we encourage you to investigate low cost or free venues. For example, you or other alumni may be able to hire rooms for no cost through workplaces or community centres which can host discussion based events.

While you may want to organise panel discussions or other lecture-based events, you should also consider less formal events, such as meet-ups, where alumni may arrange to attend a local event together. For associations with low engagement numbers, this may be an easier and less-pressured way to meet with alumni.

Funding **may** be provided to support the cost of events and engagement activities and you should contact the Alumni Team/British Council if you require funds.

Virtual engagement

Associations may also consider organising virtual events to connect with Scholars and alumni. There are a number of online platforms available to host online events, although you should consider technological challenges and disparities in internet connectivity which may prevent some Scholars and alumni from participating. A template for a short event hosted using Zoom has been developed which you can view on the [resources webpage](#).

Organising events

- The coordinator or lead contact must submit a completed [Event proposal form](#) listing potential events or activities for the year (between April-March) by the end of May. Where funding may be required, the coordinator or lead contact must also submit a completed [Funding request form](#).
- Events should be spread throughout the year and can be of a social, academic, developmental, or cultural nature.
- Where possible, events should take place in different cities or regions to increase participation, as well as consider virtual delivery.
- Risk assessments must be completed for all face to face or virtual events and templates are available on the [resources webpage](#).

When planning your event or engagement activity, you should consider the following:

- Activities that will engage all attendees, for example a panel discussion, workshop, themed quiz, presentation(s). All activities should be accessible.
- Identifying a suitable and accessible venue, or whether the event is to be hosted online. If you choose to visit schools or other organisations, you should seek advice regarding their safeguarding requirements of you and any external attendees.
- Any risks associated with the event or activity and how these will be mitigated, as outlined in the CSC's risk assessment documentation.
- Taking photos to share on CSC social media platforms. You should refer to the guidance provided below.
- Publicising the event and providing timely information to the Alumni Team/British Council. We ask that events are finalised **at least** three weeks in advance of the date.
- Managing the event on the day.
- Saying a few words about the CSC and alumni association at the start of the event.
- Keeping a record of attendance numbers and the names of Commonwealth Scholars and Alumni in attendance.

External guests and speakers

We encourage you to invite Scholars and alumni to share their work and research at events, however you may wish to invite external guests to present. You should only invite external guests who have a particular interest or association with the wider theme of the event or activity to ensure they are able to contribute effectively.

You should avoid inviting a large number of high-profile guests as protocol may dictate that they should all deliver remarks, which may take up a significant amount of the time allocated to your event.

You should provide external guests with information about the event, including the programme for the day and information about all speakers (such as a short biography).

If you invite members of the press,

they should also receive this information, as well as key information about the CSC (see below).

Recording RSVPs and attendance

You must keep a record of all Scholars, alumni, and external guests who RSVP so you can monitor the number of expected attendees. The Alumni Team/ British Council will do this for any alumni or guests they have contacted on your behalf and keep you informed of numbers.

On the day of the event you must ask attendees to sign their name when they arrive so you have a record of attendance. Attendance sheets must be shared with the Alumni Team/British Council no later than 3-weeks post-event. Do not ask attendees to share any personal details, such as contact details, as part of the attendance sheet as this data is not being collected in a secure manner.

The CSC uses attendance numbers to monitor alumni engagement and advise on the possible allocation of funding for future association activities.

Welcome and introductions

As the association coordinator it is important you say a few words to open the event and introduce speakers and external guests. You should say a few words about the CSC and can use the text below:

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK (CSC) offers opportunities for postgraduate study, research, and professional development to citizens across the Commonwealth.

The CSC's primary funder is the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), which supports scholarships for individuals to gain the knowledge and skills required for sustainable development.

The CSCs also receive funding from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), to support innovative research.

Photography

Photos are a great and easy way of showcasing events. [CSC Flickr](#) hosts Scholar and alumni event photos and will be used to share images from your event. Images may also be used on the CSC website and CSC social media channels. You must notify all participants and attendees if photos will be taken and how they may be used.

You can use the wording below in any invites, publicity, or displays. We advise you display a copy of the notice below next to the attendance sign-in sheets so attendees can read this at the start of the event.

Photographs will be taken at this event and the images may be used on the CSC website, social media channels, and publications. [Any other ways in which the images may be used, such as the association's media channels].

If you do not agree to your image being used, please notify the photographer and/or event organiser.

The CSC **cannot** use images of children under the age of 18 years of age in any of its publications or online/social media channels due to data protection. We request that you **do not** share these images following your event.

Resources

The CSC can provide a limited number of branded materials to use at events. You should notify the Alumni Team/British Council if you require these.

- Table top roller banners
- A3-size alumni portraits
- A4 struts (table signs which can be written on, for example 'Please sign-in here')

Post-event actions

Following your event it is important to send thanks to all attendees and external guests. If photos have been posted to the association social media group, you should include a link to these.

Feedback

Following your event, you must submit an event report to the Alumni Team/British Council. A template report is available on the [resources webpage](#).

You should share this information alongside any photos no later than **three-weeks** post-event.

We encourage you to collect feedback from those who attended to help inform future events. A template feedback survey is available on the [resources webpage](#) which can be adapted to suit your event. Please share any key feedback with the Alumni Team/British Council.

Templates

Event planning template

Pre-event			
Action	Deadline	Assigned	Status
<p>Prepare an event brief outlining the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of the event • Planned activities • Speakers or guests identified • Proposed date of event • Suggested venue • How does the event support the aims or objectives of the association? • Does the event address the CSC themes/SDGs/DFID priorities? <p>Submit your event proposal form to the Alumni team/British Council for further comment. If funding is required, you must also submit a funding request form.</p>			
<p>If the event is approved, you will need to agree the following with the Alumni Team/British Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timelines for event planning • Event location- you may want to conduct a site visit when selecting a venue • Event programme • Guest list and key speakers • Invitations (key information to include, who will send these) • Quotations for approval (if relevant) • Press (if relevant) 			
Forward all quotations for approval prior to booking any vendors (if relevant)			
Invite any guest speakers and provide background to the purpose of the event and information about the CSC. Request invited speakers to send a short biography, or ask them to approve a draft biography which will be shared with attendees.			
<p>Send invites 4-6 weeks in advance of the event and include an RSVP deadline. Let the Alumni Team/British Council know if they need to send these on your behalf.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a document to record who is invited and their response. Take note of: accepts/regrets/undeliverable/out of office 			
Draft the event programme and share this with guest speakers to confirm timings			

Send a final reminder to all those who have not RSVP'd before the final RSVP deadline			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create registration sign-in sheet to monitor attendance • Print name badges/place cards/guest lists/programmes • Collate any additional materials needed for planned activities 			
Send a reminder to all those attending 1 week before the event and provide any further information about the event, for example the event programme and speaker biographies			
Confirm that guest speakers have all the information they need in advance of the event			
During event			
Manage the event on the day, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room set-up • Registration set-up • Catering 			
Welcome guests and ensure they register their attendance			
During welcome remarks, say a few words about the scope of the event, the CSC, and the alumni association (see Handbook for set text). Thank any guests and participants for taking part.			
Post-event			
Share attendance list with Alumni Team/British Council			
Send an email and/or letter of thanks to external guests.			
Depending on the event, you should collect feedback. You should refer to the event feedback survey template for guidance. The CSC Alumni Team/British can help draft and send a feedback survey to all those who attended.			
If the event was organised with fellow alumni, schedule a post-event de-brief to discuss what went well, what didn't, future developments			
Forward any outstanding invoices for payment (if relevant)			
Submit your event report and any photos to the Alumni Team/British Council.			

All forms referenced can be found on the [CSC website](#).

Event invite template- alumni and Distance Learning Scholars

Key information to include:

- Name of the association
- The type and title of the event
- Date, time and location of the event
- Purpose of the event
- How to RSVP
- Photography notification
- Dietary requirements (if refreshments will be available)
- Contact details

Subject line: Your invitation to [the CSC Alumni Association Botswana Lecture Series]

The [Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows Alumni Association Botswana (CSFAAB)] is delighted to invite you to attend our upcoming [lecture series, 'Changing the climate for women'], on [Thursday 19 July 2018 from 5.30-8.00pm], at the [location].

[Purpose of the event]

The lecture series, 'Changing the climate for women', will provide the opportunity for you to hear two Commonwealth Alumni and a current Distance Learning Scholar discuss their work in the field of climate change and the importance of increasing the number of women studying STEM subjects. Each speaker will deliver a 15 minute presentation, followed by a Q&A. Speakers include:

- [Name], [job title], [employer], [scholarship details e.g. 1995 Scholar, PhD Climatology, University of Leeds]

If you would like to attend the lecture series, you must RSVP by **12.00pm on Monday 16 July 2018** by contacting [Name and email address]. Please note that photographs will be taken during the event. If you do not wish to be photographed, please let us know in advance.

Light refreshments will be available during the event. If you have any dietary requirements, please let me know in advance.

I look forward to seeing you at the lecture. If you have any queries, please email [email]

Event Invite Template- external speakers and guests

In the case of external speakers, we advise that you send a hard copy letter of invitation, or attach a soft copy letter to an email.

[Address]

[Date]

Dear [Name]

[Commonwealth Scholarship Commission Alumni Association Botswana- Lecture Series]

I am writing to invite you to attend and say a few words at the [Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows Alumni Association Botswana (CSFAAB)] upcoming [lecture series, 'Changing the climate for women'].

Since 1959, over [160 citizens from Botswana] have been awarded a Commonwealth Scholarship or Fellowship to undertake postgraduate study in the UK or in Botswana through a UK distance learning programme. The alumni association in Botswana aims to connect Commonwealth Alumni and current Scholars through a range of events and engagement activities to foster discussion on key development issues in Botswana.

The lecture series, ['Changing the climate for women', will focus on the work of two Commonwealth Alumni and a current Distance Learning Scholar working in the field of climate change and the importance of increasing the number of women studying STEM subjects. Each speaker will deliver a 15 minute presentation, followed by a Q&A.]

The event will take place on [Thursday 19 July 2018 from 5.30-8.00pm], at the [location]. We would be delighted if you, [or another representative of X], would agree to attend and say a few words to open or close the event on the importance of raising female participation in the sciences.

I very much hope that you will be able to join alumni at the first event of this type. Please let me know if you or another colleague will be able to accept this invitation, by contacting me at [email].

Post-event thank you template

Following your event you should send a thank you email to all attendees.

Subject line: Thank you for attending our recent [\[lecture series\]](#)

Thank you for attending the [\[Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows Alumni Association Botswana \(CSFAAB\)\]](#) recent [\[lecture series, 'Changing the climate for women'\]](#). I hope you found this an engaging event and had the opportunity to ask any questions of the speakers, as well as meet with fellow alumni and Scholars in attendance.

Photos from the event are now available on [\[association social media group\]](#), at [\[web link\]](#). You can also view these on CSC Flickr, at [\[web link\]](#).

Feedback

It is important for the planning of future events that you provide feedback about the recent [\[lecture series\]](#). We would be grateful if you could take the time to complete a short survey, [\[link\]](#)

Remember, you can stay engaged with the association at all times through our social media group, at [\[web link\]](#). You should also keep the CSC Alumni team up to date with your current contact and employment details to ensure that you continue to receive news and updates about Commonwealth Scholarships. You can update your details through the [alumni update form](#).

Post-event thank you template- external guests and speakers

In the case of external speakers, we advise that you send a hard copy letter of thanks, or attach a soft copy letter to an email.

[Address]

[Date]

Dear [Name]

[Commonwealth Scholarship Commission Alumni Association Botswana- Lecture Series]

I am writing to thank you for joining us at our lecture series, 'Changing the climate for women' and for your [keynote/opening/closing remarks] to Commonwealth Scholars and Alumni. [Comment on contribution made by their speech or remarks]. I am very grateful to you for making the time available to meet with Commonwealth Scholars and Alumni.

These events provide Commonwealth Scholars and Alumni an opportunity to come together and share knowledge around important issues, as well as to support each other in achieving our own sustainable development goals. I hope that you found this event an opportunity to gain further insight into the impact of Commonwealth Alumni.

Thanks once again for taking the time to be part of our event, and for helping to make it such a success.

Event programme template

Depending on the type of event organised, there are key information that you should include in the event programme. Please use the templates below to give you an idea of how to structure your event and gain maximum engagement from attendees.

Key information to include

- Activity timings
- Names and details of any speakers/presenters
- Opening and closing remarks

Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows Alumni Association Botswana (CSFAAB) Lecture Series

Changing the climate for women

Thursday 19 July 2018 from 5.30-8.00pm

Location

17.30-17.45 Registration | Location

17.45-18.00 Welcome and introduction | **Location**

[Name], [role, e.g. alumni association coordinator]

18.00-19.15 Presentations | Location

Presentation title- [Name], [job title], [employer], [Scholarship details]

Presentation title- [Name], [job title], [employer], [Scholarship details]

19.15-19.20 Closing remarks | Location

[Name], [role, e.g. alumni association coordinator]

19.20-20.00 Reception | Location

20.00 Event close

